

State of Arkansas
92nd General Assembly
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As Engrossed: H4/3/19
A Bill

SENATE BILL 603

By: Senators A. Clark, Elliott

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH STATE CATEGORICAL FUNDING AND LEVELS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPPORT; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE TO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH CERTAIN SCORES ON THE STATE'S PRIOR YEAR SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR READING LEVELS OF SUPPORT; TO AMEND THE APPROVED PURPOSES ON WHICH NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH STATE CATEGORICAL FUNDS MAY BE SPENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE CERTAIN LEVELS OF SUPPORT TO CERTAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS BASED ON READING SCORES; AND TO AMEND THE PURPOSES ON WHICH NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH STATE CATEGORICAL FUNDS MAY BE SPENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative intent.

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Full implementation of Arkansas' goal of a student-focused education system for all students will require most schools to rethink, if not restructure, their entire educational program and reallocate all current and any new resources to a restructured and more effective educational delivery;



(2) Since 2005, two billion six hundred eighty-six million eight hundred five thousand eight hundred fifty dollars (\$2,686,805,850) in national school lunch funds have been sent to public schools in Arkansas;

(3) National school lunch state categorical programs are designed to provide extra help and strategies for struggling students and must be focused to target the needs of struggling students;

(4) Current flexibility in national school lunch state categorical funding allowable expenditures has not shown that the funds have had a positive impact on student outcomes or successfully closed achievement gaps;

(5) Public school districts spend the highest amount of national school lunch state categorical funds on curriculum specialists and instructional facilitators and other activities that are not specified by law or Department of Education rule that have been approved by the Department of Education, and transfer national school lunch state categorical funds to other categorical programs;

(6) Thirty-four percent (34%) of Arkansas public students in grades three through ten (3-10) are scoring at the lowest level of performance on the ACT Aspire reading test;

(7) Six (6) Core Strategies were included in the Odden and Picus Original 2003 Adequacy Report, the 2006 Recalibration report, and the 2014 Desk Audit, and all educational initiatives included in these reports and the funding used for the educational initiatives are backed by evidence-based research;

(8) Arkansas's students must be prepared for college, careers, and citizenship in the current global economy, and work in the knowledge-based economy requires the same skills and expertise to go to college or to enter the work force after high school;

(9) Public schools must deploy more powerful instructional strategies and use resources more productively, and need to change the curriculum that is used, the means of organizing instruction, and how resources are used;

(10) Teacher development opportunities must be redesigned to provide personalized opportunities so that all teachers acquire the instructional expertise to educate all students by using the extensive professional development resources that are included in the funding model in

the most effective ways;

(11) Schools must reinforce achievement for struggling students by providing a series of extended learning opportunities, such as some combination of one-on-one and small group tutoring by a licensed teacher, extended-day learning, and summer school programs, and must hold performance standards high and vary instructional time so all students can achieve rigorous standards in order to work towards closing the achievement gap; and

(12) The House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education, meeting jointly, find it necessary to revise current national school lunch state categorical funding allowable expenditures in order to maximize the most effective use of funds and focus allowable expenditures on targeted programs that maximize student achievement.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2913(a), concerning levels of school district support, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(3) Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the department shall provide:

(A)(i) Level 3 – Coordinated support to a public school district in which forty percent (40%) or more of the public school district's students score "in need of support" on the state's prior year summative assessment for reading.

(ii) Level 3 – Coordinated support shall be provided in collaboration with the public school district's educational service cooperative; and

(B) Level 4 – Directed support to a public school district in which fifty percent (50%) or more of its students score "in need of support" on the state's prior year summative assessment for reading.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2914(d), concerning required public school district support plans, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(3)(A) A public school district in which forty percent (40%) or more of the public school district's students scored "in need of support" on the state's prior year summative assessment for reading shall develop a literacy plan as part of the public school district support plan required

under this section.

(B) The public school district literacy plan shall include:

(i) Goals for improving reading achievement throughout the public school district; and

(ii) Information regarding the prioritization of funding, including without limitation national school lunch state categorical funds received under § 6-20-2305, for strategies to improve reading achievement throughout the public school district.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(4)(C)(i), concerning approved programs and purposes for which national school lunch state categorical funds may be expended, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(c) The list of approved programs established before the passage of this act by the state board under subdivision (b)(4)(C)(i)(a) of this section shall expire on June 30, 2022.

/s/A. Clark

APPROVED: 4/17/19